

Montana DEQ Forest Fire Smoke Advisory

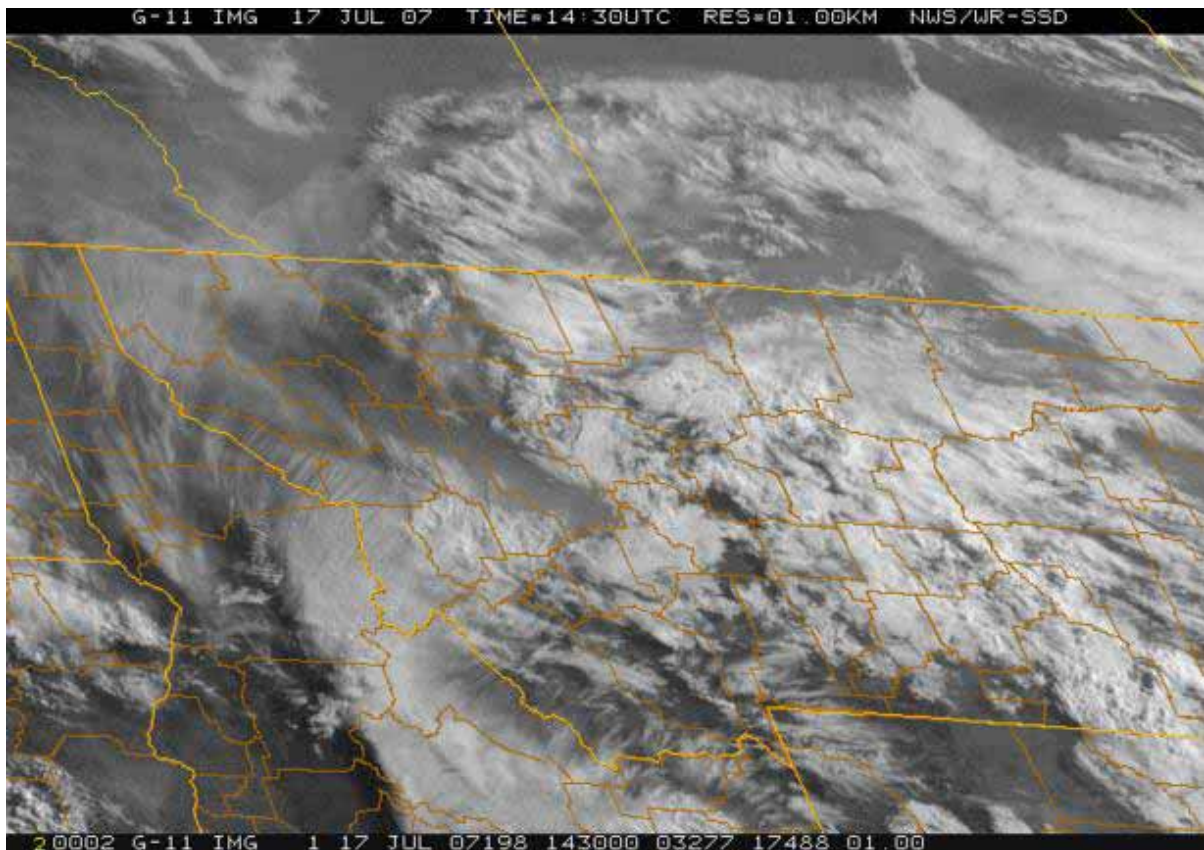
July 17 2007

10:00 AM Tuesday July 17

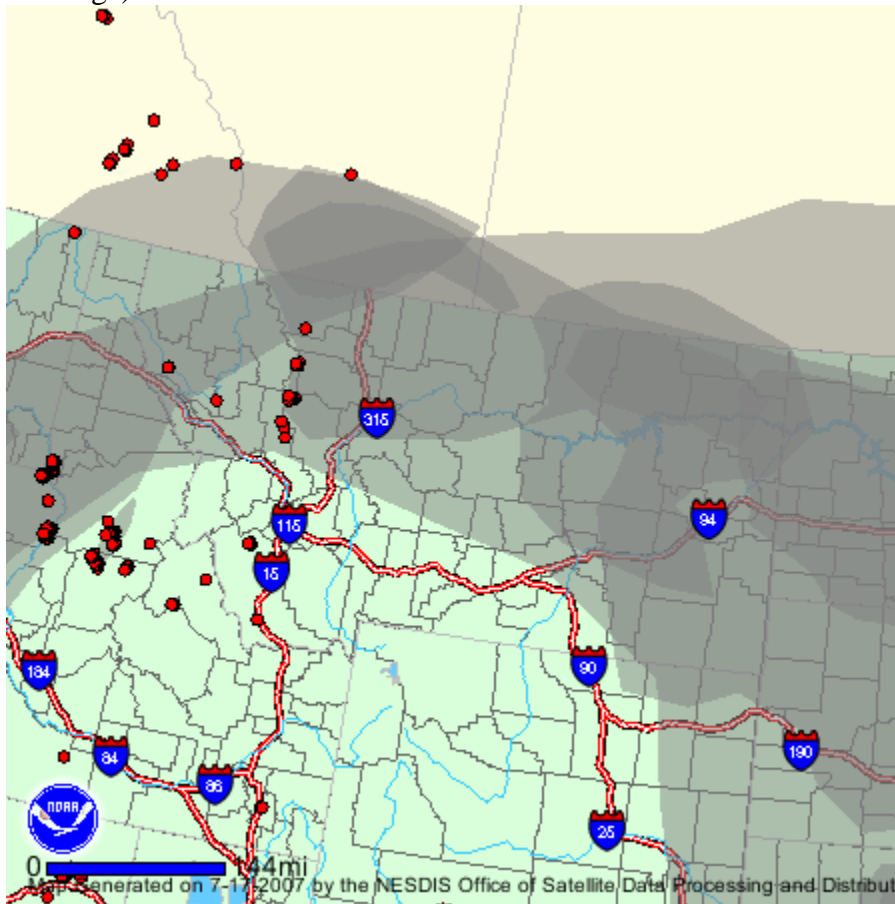
Current Situation

There is a lot of smoke visible between the clouds on this morning's Satellite photo. Smoke from Oregon, Idaho and Washington has rounded the ridge to the west and pushed into western Montana yesterday. East winds are keeping the smoke in the area and for the day and Whitefish, Kalispell, Polson and Ronan are all listed at UNHEALTHY FOR SENSITIVE on this morning's report as persistent haze has raised the 24 hour averages into the first health advisory range. MODERATE smoke conditions are being reported in Libby, Missoula and Cut Bank at this time. The rest of the state will be seeing hazy sky for the rest of the day and may experience noticeable smoke at the surface for a few hours later in the day as the smoke mixes down. See the forecast below for details. Smoke conditions near the active fires in Montana are expected to be UNHEALTHY or worse. Residents near active fires or experiencing noticeable smoke levels should use the VISIBILITY GUIDELINES to determine smoke levels in their area and guide their activity decisions.

Morning satellite photo centered on Great Falls:



This morning's analysis from NOAA's satellite services division shows the active fires in Montana and the smoke plumes combining and spreading downwind (the analyzed smoke is based on yesterday's satellite coverage, the fire detects are based on last night's satellite coverage)



Red indicates hot spot detected. Grey represents smoke seen by satellite. Fire size is exaggerated for visibility at this scale

To identify individual fires on graphic above go here:

http://activefiremaps.fs.fed.us/lg_fire2.php

Real time particulate information is currently available in most of the larger urban areas from several different sources including: DEQ run PM-10 BAMS and PM2.5 BAMS, NWS ASOS visibility monitors, and USFS remote access Nephelometers and BAMS.

This morning's smoke report is below, comparing particulate levels where we have information to MDEQ's Forest Fire health advisory levels.

<http://www.deq.state.mt.us/FireUpdates/SmokeCategories.asp>

Updated 10 AM July 17, 2007

Locations and severity of forest fire smoke reports since midnight of the date above at reporting stations.

T1(x) One-hour TEOM or BAM value (number of values)
T8(x) Eight-hour average TEOM or BAM value(number of values)
T24 24 hour average TEOM or BAM value
Vis(x) Visibility value(number of hours)
Vis(am/pm) Visibility value from twice/day reporting stations
(est) estimate

Local impacts in areas immediately adjacent to active fires are expected to exceed some or all of the advisory levels. DEQ recommends the use of local visibility guidelines

HAZARDOUS	
VERY UNHEALTHY	
UNHEALTHY	
UNHEALTHY FOR SENSITIVE GROUPS	Whitefish T24 Kalispell T24 Polson (est) Ronan T24
MODERATE	Libby T24 Missoula T24 Cut Bank Vis(1)

<http://www.deq.state.mt.us/FireUpdates/VisibilityRanges.asp>

to evaluate possible health risks and make informed activity decisions.

Forecast

There will very little overall transport of smoke today as light easterly winds in many areas will keep the smoke anchored over the mountains today. Mixing heights will be very high this afternoon with good instability and scattered thunderstorms providing excellent dispersion and most areas in the smoke today should see substantially lower particulate levels this afternoon unless they happen to be downwind of any local significant fire activity. The smoke aloft will mix down to the surface for few hours later this morning and some areas will see a temporary increase in particulate levels for a few hours then. Stronger winds from the south are forecast for tomorrow and that will bring warmer temperatures and increased fire activity. Areas to the north of the active fires zones in the state could see high levels of smoke tomorrow. This would include the Butte and Helena areas and the Rocky Mountain Front from Chouteau north to the Canadian border. Residents near active fires need to remain aware of current conditions and use the visibility guidelines:

<http://www.deq.state.mt.us/FireUpdates/VisibilityRanges.asp>

to guide their activity decisions as the situation changes.

John Coefield
Meteorologist
Montana Department of Environmental Quality

Jcoefield@mt.gov